DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 200 178 HE 013 670

AUTHOR Nossen, Robert, Ed.
TITLE The Retention Committee, University of Pittsburgh. A Report to the Provost.
INSTITUTION Pittsburgh Univ., Pa.
PUB DATE Aug 80
NOTE 74p.

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Persistence; *Advisory Committees; College Environment; College Freshmen; College Students; *Commuting Students; *Educational Counseling; Educational Facilities; Faculty Advisers; Higher Education; Information Needs; Institutional Research; *Minority Groups; Physical Environment; Policy Formation; Position Papers; *School Holding Power; Student Adjustment; Student Attrition; Student Needs; *Student Teacher Relationship; Teacher Behavior
IDENTIFIERS *University of Pittsburgh PA

ABSTRACT

Studies by task forces of the University of Pittsburgh's Retention Committee, which identified problem areas and offered suggestions to increase student retention, are described. The Task Force on Student/Faculty Relationships studied existing files of complaints from students and surveyed students on their experiences with faculty members. Complaints about faculty included: lack of commitment to the teaching task, inaccessibility to students, and poor teaching skills. The Task Force on Advisement recommended drafting a policy statement concerning advisement that would specify guidelines, advisor/advisee ratios, and other needs. The Task Force on the Freshman Year offered suggestions regarding initial contacts with the university, adjustments to the university, academic skills programs, and other areas. The Task Force on Commuter Concerns addressed the needs of commuters of the traditional college age group and made recommendations concerning academic and related support areas, information access, and student activities. The Task Force on Minorities obtained information regarding undergraduate minority student retention from schools within the university and identified concerns within environmental, sociocultural, and cognitive/affective domains. The Task Force on Physical Environment studied student perceptions of the university's physical environment, which was defined in terms of its academic and nonacademic facilities and its general ambiance. Appended materials include student comments concerning faculty, and a sample faculty relations questionnaire. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED200178

The Retention Committee
The University of Pittsburgh

A REPORT TO THE PROVOST

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Univ of Pittsburgh

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

August, 1980

HE013670

The Retention Committee

Robert Nossen, Chairperson, Office of the Provost

Shirley M. Atkins, School of Health Related Professions
Gail Austin, University-Community Educational Programs
Patricia Beck, College of General Studies Student
John W. Blanton, Athletic Department
Alden E. Bowen, Student Affairs
Linda M. Burns, College of Arts and Sciences
G. Gee Chin, Office of the Provost
Jack Daniel, Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Samuel D. Deep, University External Studies Program
Robert G. Dilts, School of Education
Lewis W. Dittert, School of Pharmacy
Robert M. Firth, Student Affairs
Crystel Gabrich, College of Arts and Sciences
Enid Goldberg, School of Nursing
Jeff Gordon, College of Arts and Sciences Student
J. Steele Gow, College of General Studies
R. Gary Houston, Student Affairs
Hilda Jones, Office of Institutional Research and Policy Studies
James Kelly, School of Education
Conney M. Kimbo, Student Affairs
Frederick J. Koloc, College of Arts and Sciences
Karen H. Kovalchick, Office of the Provost
Anne Levenson, College of General Studies
E. Tracy Lewis, Student Affairs
Regis J. Meenihan, College of General Studies
Joseph A. Merante, Admissions and Student Aid
Cynthia Mittelmeier, College of Arts and Sciences Student
George Plutchok, School of Social Work
Julius A. Ray, Business and Finance
Reid R. Reading, College of Arts and Sciences
Frank F. Reed, Business and Finance
Joel Reed, University-Community Educational Programs
Eugene C. Richardson, Business and Finance
Susan Schiller, Learning Skills Center
Edward B. Stuart, School of Engineering
Robert L. Wolke, Office of Faculty Development

Each of the task force reports, while edited for consistency, style, and avoidance of repetition, reflects essentially the views and findings of that group. If some of the observations appear negative in terms of current practices, they are made in the hope that the University, while serving many students and student needs effectively, will improve both its image and its operation through the coming years in order to maintain or further its status and attraction for students in a rapidly changing world of higher education.

Table of Contents

		Page
I.	General Background	1
II.	Brief Survey of the Literature	6
III.	Task Force on Student/Faculty Relationships	11
IV.	Task Force on Advisement	25
V.	Task Force on the Freshman Year	27
VI.	Task Force on Commuter Concerns	31
VII.	Task Force on Minorities	35
VIII.	Task Force on Physical Environment	43
IX.	Conclusions and Summary of Recommendations	46
X.	Appendices	50

Appendix A
Appendix B
Appendix C
Appendix D

The Retention Committee
The University of Pittsburgh

A Report to the Provost

August, 1980

I. General Background

Few matters in academic institutions are being accorded greater attention at the present time than retention of students. The motivation is essentially twofold: to compensate in part for declining numbers of potential students by increasing the retention rate of those who do enroll; and to reduce the numbers of young persons who become disenchanted with the inadequacies, or indifferences of colleges and universities and drop out.

The admissions outlook for the current decade has been all too well documented and publicly discussed. To repeat only the most significant factors: Pennsylvania faces a decline of some 31% in high school graduates, and the loss will be particularly apparent in western Pennsylvania. State wide, the figures show 181,400 graduates in 1979, projected down to 147,000 by 1985, to 125,000 in 1990, and a continuing decline through that decade.

One can, of course, compound these negative statistics relative to the future of formal postsecondary learning. A changing attitude towards higher education tends to discount the value of the process; competition has been growing from a variety of proprietary career training programs; the spectre of some form of a national service program for young people looms ever larger; technology and those who sell it are increasing their

efforts to provide "alternative" methods of learning; and, of course, the very costs of attending a traditional college or university coupled with increasing economic uncertainties continue to militate against all institutions.

Despite such realities, however, Pitt retains a potential to strengthen its position: as an urban centered, comprehensive institution, it has particular advantages over most other institutions.

Pitt has, of course, been directly involved in efforts to improve its retention of qualified students over the past several years. In 1977, for example, a study was undertaken by the Office of Institutional Research in order to provide direct information about students who have left the University. Each School in its own ways has developed plans to improve retention of its students and, coordinately, to counsel those students who are unable to maintain their academic progress towards alternative fields of study.

Most undergraduates, of course, enroll in CAS, followed by CGS. A brief review of the CAS experience, therefore, should prove advantageous in understanding the problem for undergraduates in general. Although CAS has not developed a comprehensive retention strategy, it has engaged in a number of informal attempts to analyze weaknesses and to improve its operational procedures.

The number of CAS students who drop out has not increased significantly over the past five years: the number has leveled at about 1,250 annually. Although numerous "reasons" have been offered, there is a consensus that rarely does a student drop out for any single reason;

it is an accumulation and combination of factors that precipitate the eventual discontinuation of higher education by a student. There is a need to improve the identification process of those who leave as well as a need to distinguish those who should drop out because of lack of ability or sufficient motivation, from those who should not.

The recently adopted "basic skills" requirements have been a step in the right direction. Increased efforts to follow up on the academic progress of incoming students have also been of value. Nevertheless, a better student record keeping system is needed and is being developed so that CAS students may be tracked more accurately (see Appendix D). Efforts also are continuing to encourage those on academic probation to utilize the resources of the Learning Skills Center.

The greatest degrees of difficulty continue to be:

1. The reluctance of some faculty to become academically and professionally concerned about students;

2. The lack of adequate availability of student records by faculty advisors (see Appendix D);

3. An "add" period which perhaps is too long and allows students to begin new classes after having missed as much as two weeks of instruction (about 74% of second term freshmen and first term sophomores change their registration through the add/drop process); and

4. The lack of an effective, highly structured exit interview process (which, incidentally, might prove effective both for those who graduate and for those who drop out). There are, however, problems related to the conduct of such an interview and from a practical standpoint, the recommendation has limitations.

Normally, dropout students tend to become "invisible" for a period of time before actually withdrawing from the University. They no longer attend classes, they miss appointments with advisors. To the extent that large class sizes and other factors permit, reporting of such evidences by faculty members may allow for follow up procedures which could alter the trend for these students and enable at least some of them to retain active status.

A task force has been working on the basic problem of delays in the registration process, and the long and frequently frustrating lines that students face at the beginning of each term. There are efforts, too, to improve the process for collecting fees, so that less time need be involved. A significant approach has been made to improve attitudes towards students by all clerical personnel who work directly with them. And such developments as the Honors Program have made the University attractive and challenging to a significant number of particularly well qualified students who might otherwise become bored or indifferent. Of no little importance, efforts continue towards improvement of the campus and area physical environment. Further, the CAS Advising Center has undertaken a number of efforts to improve their services.

Yet none of these things, particularly taken in isolation, is enough. Nor are the shortcomings limited to CAS. A continuing University-wide commitment to students is essential.

The Committee does not suggest that academic standards be lowered or that demands for instructional integrity be lessened: on the contrary,

it has been proved that students respond positively to a demanding and challenging academic program. But demand and challenge tend to get lost if not coupled with concern for the individual and with a variety of responses to individual needs.

Those within the University, whether in administrative, faculty, staff or student roles must develop a mutual respect and sense of cooperative mission. All are inevitably and continually involved in creating a learning environment to which students can affirmatively respond. It is within this spirit that each of the task forces has engaged upon its specific study and that the final recommendations have emerged.

II. Brief Survey of the Literature

The available literature on student retention is vast and increasing. "What works in student retention" is a theme adding materially to the cliches of academe, and the lists of "how to" procedures are being reviewed, adapted, and adopted by institutions of all sizes, missions, and qualifications.

One of the more significant studies is that V. Tinto, Dropout from Higher Education: A Theoretical Synthesis of Recent Research (Review of Educational Research, 1975). He points out that, as a result of his or her family background, individual attributes, and pre-college schooling, the individual student brings two types of commitments to college: to the goal of college completion, and to the particular institution he enters. Tinto notes that it is the interplay between these two commitments that ultimately determines whether the individual will drop out.

Some figures might be in order: nationally, of freshmen entering baccalaureate programs, 10% drop out; 20% graduate after transferring; 20% transfer but do not graduate; 40% graduate in four years, and 10% graduate after the four year period.

Those who have intensely studied the situation report that the first six weeks on campus are critical. If students are started "right," they tend to remain. Such "right starts" involve, of course, a variety of environmental factors, advisement, student response to the instructional program, and the ability of individuals to respond personally in some concrete ways to opportunities available within the University structure.

It can be expressed as a truism that students drop out when education does not seem to them to be a major priority, and there is little in their initial experience that reinforces their determination to continue; or when becoming disenchanted with the academic scene, they find other alternatives.

In national surveys conducted by ACT and other groups, students generally suggest financial considerations as their reason for dropping out. But intensive studies have shown that such responses are often rationalizations rather than realities. Uncertainty about what to study is a major reason why even talented students do not remain. Lack of assistance in career planning affects many. Then, the following weaknesses tend to negate student interest: lack of work opportunities, lack of skills in mathematics and reading and, not having the opportunity to discuss personal problems or health problems with persons of competence or concern.

Another truism, and one constantly perpetrated (perhaps necessarily so in a research oriented institution) is that freshmen, when they have the greatest need for strong instruction, end up with inexperienced graduate teaching fellows whose priority is their own work rather than their classroom responsibilities. Long has this been recognized and talked about, but less than adequate effort has been made to assure undergraduates, particularly during the crucial first year, at least moderate exposure to the best instruction that is available on campus.

There is evidence that "academic boredom" is frequently based upon instructional content that repeats what students learned in high school, or simply reflects uninspired teaching. First generation students

(at Pitt we have long attracted first generation students and hopefully will continue to do so) bring uninformed expectations to campus. When they fail to get desired answers, or guidance towards forming their own answers, they quickly become disillusioned.

If the faculty have a direct responsibility in these processes, and there is every indication that they bear the chief responsibility, then faculty must assume responsibilities beyond those of providing solid classroom instruction: they must help students build self-confidence; they must seek ways to interact with students; they must be willing to serve, formally or informally, in an advising capacity. Virtually all studies point, as the key to student retention, the functions of advising, both personal and academic. Advising emerges as the critical force in student retention more often than any other single factor.

There are two systems--the academic and the social--into which the student must become integrated if dropping out is to be avoided. Academic integration occurs when the student's grade performance is consistent both with his or her own expectations and with the standards of the institution. Studies have indicated the following generalities:

1. A student with high goal commitment and low grades will persist either through to graduation or to the point of academic dismissal.

2. A student with low goal commitment and high grades will tend to withdraw and transfer to another institution.

3. A student with low goal commitment and low grades will probably withdraw prior to academic dismissal and is not likely to transfer to another college.

Students are also likely to withdraw voluntarily and transfer whenever they feel that their intellectual development is not progressing to a degree that is consistent with their goal commitment.

The other need for student integration is with the social system of the institution, that is, the peer group and faculty interactions available to the student. Referred to earlier, it relates to the degree the student becomes involved in the various nonacademic programs of the institution. This is emphasized in a study by Lee Noel, Reducing the Dropout Rate (Jossey-Bass, 1978). Noel concludes from a synthesis of research and actual institutional experience that colleges wishing to reduce attrition must establish and maintain a supportive campus climate, which he terms a "staying" environment. The creation of such an atmosphere begins with the assumption that the quality of student life on a given campus is everyone's concern, and that each college employee is a retention agent, from the custodians to the president.

While the "staying" environment includes an academic component, it places a particular emphasis upon the social/psychological component: the development of a feeling of belonging, personal worth, positive identity, and high self-esteem. Noel's "staying" environment sounds much like Tinto's: identification of academic integration and social integration as the major determinants of student persistence and dropout. Astin, Preventing Students from Dropping Out (1975) has performed perhaps the most comprehensive statistical analysis of attrition to date; one of his major findings is that after entering characteristics and college grades are taken into account,

college persistence is enhanced by the student's involvement in campus life.

The literature, then, presents a relatively cohesive report on problems of student retention. Essentially, the points may be reduced to three: the effectiveness of the instructional program; the effectiveness of personal and academic advisement; and the social or nonacademic life of the institution. There are, of course, factors unique to every institution and it has not been assumed that all points necessarily relate to, or reflect, this University. It is however, essential for the faculty and staff of the University to be aware of findings and observations pertinent nationally.

III. Task Force on Student/Faculty Relationships (Robert L. Wolke, Chairperson; Jeff Gordon, J. Steele Gow, Frederick J. Koloc, and George Plutchock)

A. Collection of Data*

The task force used two complementary approaches to investigate student/faculty relationships as they might affect student attrition. Some of the variables were not controlled so that the conclusions, while perhaps lacking full scientific accuracy, present valuable indicators of student perceptions. Data was collected from the following two sources:

1. A study of existing files of spontaneously-arising complaints from students; and

2. A survey of students on their experiences with all the instructors they have had in courses.

The first study (the "complaint study") was for the purpose of learning what kinds of student/faculty problems surfaced most frequently, becoming acute enough to lead students to complain. The second study ("the dormitory survey") was to try to learn just how prevalent such problems are among the faculty.

The complaint study was carried out by examining the following existing records of student complaints:

1. The College of General Studies (CGS) Dean's Office;

2. The CGS Advising Service's records; and

*Note: As the task force's work proceeded through the collection of data and into its interpretation, it became clear that the recommendations would include the tighter administrative monitoring of some of the faculty's routine teaching responsibilities. At this point, Robert Wolke withdrew from the active leadership of the task force because of a conflict of interest with his position as Director of the Office of Faculty Development, which is a unit that offers collegial teaching-improvement services to faculty members who voluntarily seek them without any actual or implied administrative coercion. Thereafter, he merely presided at the meetings. The recommendations below are therefore those of the task force as a body, and are neither endorsed nor disputed by Robert Wolke.

3. The CGS Student Cabinet's Course Complaint System.

The individual complaints from these sources were sifted for items related to faculty behaviors, and could be clustered into four categories:

1. Lack of commitment to the teaching task;
2. Inaccessibility to students;
3. Poor teaching skills; and
4. Dereliction of basic teaching duties.

These results are amplified in Section B., 1. It should be emphasized that the number of faculty involved constitute a relatively small percentage of the total and the task force in no way assumes that the indicated characteristics apply to "faculty in general." The pattern of faculty behaviors however, has a significant impact upon student views.

The dormitory survey was conducted by designing a questionnaire on specific student/faculty problems and administering it to a random sample of students in the Towers dormitories on three successive evenings near the end of the 1980 Winter Term. The aid of the University Center for Social and Urban Research was obtained in designing the questionnaire. The results of this survey are presented in Section B., 2.

B. Results and Conclusions

The following are observations of students who have made complaints and chosen to respond. While not intended to be quantitative, the comments reflect relatively large numbers.

1. The Complaint Study

Student dissatisfaction with student/faculty relations, according to the expressed complaints of students, appears to have four principal causes:

(1) Lack of commitment to the task of undergraduate teaching;

(2) Inaccessibility of faculty to students seeking help;

(3) Inadequate teaching or communication skills; and

(4) Dereliction of basic duties of the instructional assignments.

These causes were identified by categorizing CGS student complaints filed with the CAS Dean's Office, CGS advisors and CGS Student Cabinet Office. Oral responses to a telephone survey, conducted by the Office of Institutional Research (OIR) among Winter Term 1979 dropouts from several other undergraduate schools, were looked at to confirm that complaints voiced by enrolled students are not significantly different than those given by dropouts as reasons for leaving Pitt. The answers OIR received were found to be generally consistent with the categories in the CGS complaint study. While the specific wording students used varied widely, the responses are readily synthesized as follows:

a. Lack of Commitment to the Task

This unquestionably is the most pervasive cause as perceived by dissatisfied students. They complain that some Pitt

instructors do not seem to care about their undergraduate teaching or about undergraduate students. Students usually attribute this, rightly or wrongly, to faculty members' overwhelmingly greater concern for their own research or interest in graduate teaching. Graduate assistant teachers, of whom many feel there is too much use, are said often to regard their undergraduate teaching assignments as burdensome chores to be passed off with as little attention as possible. Some regular faculty are said to appear to be disdainful of Pitt undergraduates, regarding them as unworthy of the faculty's best efforts. This "don't care" attitude, students complain, can undermine everything else, from the students' motivation to learn to the teachers' best pedagogical techniques. And, they say, it is relfected in lowered academic standards and expectations for student performance, since too many faculty members seems to feel that undergraduate education is "simply not all that important."

b. Inaccessibility of Faculty

Students report some faculty members who act as though their instructional responsibility is confined strictly to the scheduled hours of class meetings, as being reluctant to talk with students who are seeking help either after class or during office hours, as being absent often during nominally scheduled office hours, and as failing to return phone calls from students who try that method of asking questions. Evening students feel especially deprived, in that it is most unusual for departments to require faculty assigned evening classes to schedule evening office hours, without which working students (80% of CGS enrollment) have to take time off their jobs in order to meet instructors. Like lack of commitment,

inaccessibility of faculty appears to students to be attitudinal, to reflect a sense that conducting the class itself is bother enough, and that making available any other time for students is an imposition on faculty. Such an arid view of the teaching-learning process is a major turn-off to both the especially able students seeking additional stimulation and to troubled ones who need extra help.

c. Poor Teaching Skills

Students perceive some faculty members, while presumably being highly knowledgeable in their fields, to be grossly inept in their teaching techniques, to be unable to explain matters articulately in coherent English even when they do not have (as many TA/TFs and some faculty do) a foreign accent that is difficult to decipher. There is, some students say, almost a disdain for instructional methodology. CGS evening students, the majority of whom have attended other colleges previously as a basis for comparison, observe that teachers at Pitt more often than in their previous experiences;

(1) Come to class unprepared, without a clear plan of what they will do there, and thus let the class drift through the period;

(2) That they lecture from the text, adding little or nothing to it, so that reasonably able readers get little benefit from class attendance;

(3) That they fail to pace themselves properly and have to jam the end-of-term periods with too much or not cover all that is intended by the course; and

(4) That testing is capricious or inept, and that too little feedback from tests is given to help students in their learning. Students are not expecting esoteric skills or super-teachers, but they do say that they expect reasonably competent performance and, too frequently, do not get it.

d. Dereliction of Basic Duties

While the frequency of this may occur less often than the other causes for being turned off at Pitt, the bitterness and intensity of resentment caused by each case of faculty dereliction of basic duties is extreme. This category includes:

(1) Failure to meet class, often the critical first class, often repeated classes through the term, and frequently without prior notice so that students make the trips, fight the parking problem and then discover no instructor;

(2) Cutting classes short, dismissing class early -- especially in the long, once-a-week evening classes -- and sometimes cutting short the term; and

(3) Failure to get grades in on time which can delay graduations, prevent employer-sponsored students collecting tuition reimbursement, or hold up certification for a job advancement -- all quite serious consequences for some students.

Adult working students especially, and Pitt is depending increasingly upon them, expect to get all the teaching they have paid for, and they cannot understand how instructors can violate the teaching contract and yet not be penalized in any way.

Neither of the sources used for this complaint study showed any significant student desire for more social interaction between

faculty and students. The concerns expressed were almost entirely centered around the formal instructional relationship. The students appear to be aware that a large research University in an urban environment cannot reasonably provide the intimate social relationships of a small residential college in an isolated setting. What is indicated that they find lacking seems to be no more than could be expected from an urban, quality, comprehensive university.

It must be stressed that offending faculty members are a minority, but not a small one. (See "The Dormitory Survey," 2.) Nevertheless, only a few such incidents are sufficient to "turn off" students. Those students who complain, and even those who drop out because of dissatisfaction, recognize that Pitt has many superb teachers who demonstrate deep concern for their students' educational problems. But in many cases, they tend to see these instances of devoted teaching as the faculty members' going against the institutional tide, rather than as a reflection of the University's commitment to undergraduate teaching.

2. The Dormitory Survey

The Complaint Study described above is strongly weighted in favor of the perceptions of CGS students, who may experience a somewhat different sampling of instructors from daytime students: more TAs, for example. Moreover, it reveals little about the prevalence of problems: the frequency with which the student body as a whole experiences student/faculty problems. The Dormitory Study was designed to obtain the broader picture. (It was assumed that commuting students are exposed to the same sampling of instructors as are resident students.)

The questionnaire was administered on the evenings of 2, 3, and 4 April, 1980, to entire dormitory floors known to house large proportions of second-term (about 30-accumulated-credit) students, inasmuch as these are presumably the ones most likely to drop out. Questionnaires were distributed by Resident Assistants and picked up about twenty minutes later. Two hundred forty four completed questionnaires were retrieved.

The questionnaire, with superimposed averages and percentages of responses, as well as seven tables in which the answers to certain questions are shown in relationship to the answers to certain others, appear in Appendix B.

3. Summary of Results

a. The average respondent is 18.9 years old, has earned 31 credits at Pitt in 2.5 terms, feel (and felt when entering) that it is very important for him or her to graduate from Pitt, and has an opinion of the teaching at Pitt which is halfway between so-so and satisfied.

b. 69% of the respondents have had at least one instructor who projected a non-caring attitude about teaching undergraduates.

c. 84% have tried at least once to meet with an instructor during office hours. Of those students, 57% have been unable to find the instructor at least once.

d. 88% have had a class cancelled, or the instructor did not show up at least once.

e. 52% have had at least one instructor who did not adequately inform the class about course grading procedures.

f. 27% are either undecided or negative about having made the right choice in coming to Pitt.

g. Table 2 shows that those students who are most uncertain about having made the right decision in coming to Pitt are those who are least satisfied with the quality of teaching. A chi-squared analysis of the data shows that the two variables are quite definitely related. The correlation coefficient is 0.19.

h. The aforementioned data are all percentages of responding students who claimed to have experienced the named behaviors. These data were also analyzed to try to ascertain roughly what percentage of the faculty might be represented by the students' responses. To do this several rather speculative assumptions had to be made, such as the number of different instructors each student has had. While the roughness of the assumptions prohibits the drawing of any really defensible conclusions, the data indicate that students in their second terms at Pitt point to about 20% of all the instructors they've had, as having shown the negative behaviors.

i. Table 5 shows that chemistry, mathematics, biology, and English were the subjects in which most of the negative faculty behaviors were experienced.

j. Table 7 is analogous to the Complaint Study, showing that instructors' foreign accents, insensitivity, and grading practices were the most common complaints of students.

C. Recommendations

The two salient results of these studies are that undesirable faculty practices reflect student dissatisfaction with teaching, and are related to their uncertainty about whether Pitt was the right choice of a college. It is reasonable to assume that the latter uncertainty is related

in turn to their likelihood of dropping out.

The task force feels that remedial measures would be more properly taken through normal, continuing administrative channels, than by strengthening the existing Academic Integrity Guidelines for faculty members, with their attendant legalistic procedures for handling infractions. The task force does note, however, that while the Integrity Guidelines provide sanctions for student infractions, there are no sanctions prescribed for faculty members' failing to meet their integrity obligations. This asymmetry should be reconsidered when the Academic Integrity Guidelines are next reexamined or revised.

The following recommendations are designed to improve the general types of behaviors uncovered by these deliberations:

1. Violations of the implicit student/faculty contract requiring that faculty members properly carry out their mechanical or procedural teaching obligations such as meeting classes regularly, being prepared for class, being present for office hours, and informing classes of the grading ground rules; and

2. The more subjective, or attitudinal problems such as lack of commitment to undergraduate teaching and poor teaching skills.

1. Recommendations for Remedying Mechanical or Procedural Inadequacies

It is a principle of academic life that faculty members be relatively free from supervision in the conduct of their duties. The task force feels, however, that it is not a violation of academic freedom to monitor the faculty's carrying out of its formal teaching obligations, at least insofar as the mechanics and procedures are concerned. Moreover, it is essential to do so, if students are to be prevented from leaving

Pitt in dissatisfaction with the quality of teaching and doing severe anecdotal damage to the University among their friends, parents, advisors, alumni, and perhaps even legislators.

The task force recommendations are:

a. That the Provost ask all department and program chairpersons in his area, through the deans as necessary, to devise in consultation with their faculties, and appropriate to their departmental missions, codes of standards for the procedural conduct of teaching duties. The standards should include as a minimum the following items:

(1) A minimum number of office hours per week to be devoted exclusively to student conferences;

(2) A maximum number of cancelled classes per term (preferably zero);

(3) Circumstances, if any, that might justify the early dismissal of classes;

(4) Procedures for having suitably-briefed faculty colleagues take over classes during unavoidable absences;

(5) Guidelines for informing classes about grading procedures; and

(6) Reasonable deadlines for returning graded papers to the classes and for turning in final grades.

Each Department's code of standards would be submitted in writing by the chairpersons through the deans, to the Provost for approval. Certain groups of similar Departments and certain Schools may, at the deans' and chairpersons' option, arrange to devise common codes to cover those groups or Schools.

b. Any infractions by faculty members of their departmental or School codes, once adopted, that come to the attention of the chairpersons (by the mechanism recommended in 2.) should be discussed with the faculty member by the chairperson. A record of that infraction and its discussion should become a part of the faculty member's dossier, so that it will be available for review at times of faculty evaluation for tenure, promotion or salary increases.

c. Periodic "booster shots," to refresh the consciousness and use of the departmental or School codes of teaching standards, should be administered at the beginning of every Fall Term by the Provost, perhaps via memorandum to the department chairpersons through the deans, or preferably, directly to faculty through the Provost's Faculty Newsletter.

2. Recommendations for Remedying Attitudinal and Teaching Inadequacies

The student-perceived deficiencies in instructors' attitudes and teaching skills cannot as easily be treated by administrative monitoring. They stem from the interaction of many complex factors, involving the faculty's and administration's values regarding the role of undergraduate teaching in the University. The following recommendations, however, are designed to help solve the problems, consistent with existing institutional objectives.

The task force recommendations are:

a. That a regular mechanism be set up by which students' complaints can reach the administrative location that is most appropriate to address them: the department or program head. A standard teaching complaint form should be devised and made readily available for students

to pick up in dean's offices, to fill out, and to mail directly to the appropriate chairperson's office. The information on these forms can then be discussed between the chairperson and the instructor involved. The form and a notation of the discussion should then become a part of the instructor's dossier, so that it will be available for review at times of faculty evaluation. Complaints will include both the mechanical or procedural infractions referred to above and issues involving attitude and teaching skills. While single or occasional complaints might be considered insignificant, larger numbers of them for any given faculty member would be the kind of symptomatic information that chairpersons need and, until now, have had no regularized way of receiving.

b. That in their annual reports to the Provost on formal academic integrity cases adjudicated in their Schools during the preceding year, the deans also report what kinds of faculty teaching infractions had been reported to chairpersons during the year, what actions had been taken in specific cases, and what the Departments have done to implement their codes of teaching standards.

c. That chairpersons be encouraged, in cases in which recurrent student complaints surface about individual faculty members, to refer them to the Office of Faculty Development for consultation on the specific problems that are uncovered. These student complaints are unique, valuable diagnostic indicators that can be used to great advantage in helping faculty members improve their teaching. This includes complaints about instructors' foreign accents, which should be reason for referral for linguistics help.

d. That, by way of positive support for conscientious teaching in their faculties, each department chairperson be asked each year to submit to his or her dean a list of the top one-third of his or her faculty in teaching competence, based on information received during that year. Faculty members would be encouraged to supply student evaluation and other data to their dossiers, to aid the chairpersons in making this annual judgment. These names would then be published as a "dean's list" of the Schools' most outstanding teachers. Avoiding the well-known drawbacks inherent in giving a small number of teaching awards to individual faculty members, this system would publicly honor the best one-third of the University's teaching faculty. The possibility of "making the dean's list" of outstanding faculty would provide an incentive to the faculty to redouble their teaching efforts.

IV. Task Force on Advisement (Frederick J. Koloc, Chairperson; Robert G. Dilts, Regis J. Meenihan, George Plutchok, and Reid Reading)

This task force wishes to caution against the idea that academic advising can be a panacea to alleviate all student retention problems; no advisory system, however good, can insure student retention unless many crucial areas of the University are improved, especially opportunities for student/faculty interaction. Still, many aspects of advising in the Provost area of responsibility can and should be strengthened.

We recommend that the Provost issue a policy statement which stresses that quality academic advising is an important and integral part of the educational process and that as such it does not merely involve the simple mechanical tasks of course selection and registration, but is an intrusive process which attempts to foster the total academic and educational development of students through exploration and synthesis of academic, career, and life goals, and through the student's full utilization of the University's resources and opportunities. This policy statement should also specify that each Provost area School or College must:

1. Work toward the implementation of an effective advising philosophy.

2. Provide initial and ongoing in-service training for all persons selected to do academic advising.

3. Provide each advisor with a manual which includes explanations of the School's procedures and policies as well as School and University resources and regulations. Update manuals regularly.

4. Determine and implement reasonable advisor/advisee ratios appropriate to each unit. (The task force learned at a recent conference that 15-20 advisees per faculty advisor, 200 advisees per full-time

professional advisor, and 100 advisees per half time advisor are suggested maximum ratios for effective academic advising.)

5. Determine a formula for advisor's availability each week based on the number of advisees he/she has. Hours should be as generous as possible and scheduled at times convenient to advisees.

6. Carry out periodic evaluations of the advising system, and make improvements based on these evaluations as indicated. (It is recognized nationally that student evaluation is the most helpful and effective method.)

7. Provide incentive and recognition for good advising.

8. Utilize this task force to draft a policy statement for endorsement by the Provost.

V. Task Force on the Freshman Year (Linda M. Burns, Chairperson; Gail Austin, Lewis W. Dittert, Crystel Gabrich, Hilda C. Jones, Karen H. Kovalchick, and Susan Schiller)

The freshman year is often the most difficult and trying year of college for many students. It is a year of great change and adjustment during which students often face difficult questions about their personal interests, goals, and directions. This task force has reviewed the entire freshman year and presents below recommendations that should make this year more satisfying and effective for students.

A. Initial Contacts with the University

Many have had the frustrating experience of meeting with prospective freshmen and their families and not being able to direct them to a central place where they can get a wide range of information and have a thorough tour of the University. Plans for a comprehensive information and referral center have been proposed by Robert Firth of the Office of New Student Programs. We strongly support implementation of such a center and suggest that a well-informed and thorough tour service operate from this Office, enabling students to make better informed decisions about attending Pitt as well as serve freshmen after they are on campus.

B. Adjustments to the University

Once a freshman begins his/her studies at Pitt, there is a difficult period of learning one's way around the campus, adjusting to the academic pressures of college, and getting to know other students. An orientation course for one or two credits should be developed and offered to freshmen during their first term. A more detailed proposal of this course is included in Appendix C. A similar course, taught by advisors, has been

offered on a very limited basis in CAS during the past few years. Students who have taken this course have been overwhelmingly positive about it and found it very helpful. Such a course should be offered on a much larger scale; Engineering and Nursing freshmen should be included. While it would be ideal for every freshman in the University to participate in such a course, initially this might not be feasible. Nevertheless, it should be made available to a substantially larger number of students than served in the past.

The task force is still in the process of working out details for the implementation of such a course, including criteria for advising students about the course; however, the following format is suggested:

1. One overall coordinator at the level of the Provost's Office.

2. Individual coordinators in CAS, Engineering, and Nursing (assuming that all Schools participate).

3. A pool of volunteer administrators and faculty provide guest presentations.

4. Instructors should be drawn from a wide range of University personnel including faculty, advisors, and administrators.

C. Academic Concerns

1. Freshman Courses

A study should be conducted to determine which courses have the greatest freshman enrollment; these courses should be reviewed carefully in terms of class size, type of instructor (graduate student or faculty), grade distribution, and student evaluation. Efforts should be made to develop a freshman curricula with reasonably small classes,

varying starting points, and high quality instructors. For example, currently a freshman who is interested in the biological sciences, regardless of his or her background or ability, must begin such study in a large lecture class with several hundred students. Classes such as these could be organized into smaller sections with some preparatory courses available for students who do not have extensive scientific backgrounds; some sections should be designed for advanced students.

2. Freshman Seminars

A series of freshman seminars are currently offered each Fall and Winter Term by CAS. These courses are small (limited to twenty two students), available only to freshmen, and usually provide the student with indepth study of a topic rather than an introduction to an entire discipline. This program was most successful in terms of student satisfaction and enrollment several years ago when a part-time coordinator had primary responsibility to recruit instructors, to develop seminar topics with the instructors, and to monitor and evaluate the courses. This program should be revitalized.

3. Academic Skills Program

Many skills-oriented facilities and courses are currently available at the University. Problems in this area include the lack of coordination and integration of such services and the difficulty of seeing that the appropriate students make use of them.

4. Advising

Freshmen who are interested in eventually applying to professional Schools should receive advice directly from these Schools through some regularized method early in their college careers.

D. Developing a Sense of Community

Efforts made to foster the sense of a University community would benefit all students, including freshmen. Suggestions include the establishment of better informal meeting and gathering facilities, and the establishment of a high quality subscription lecture series.

E. Summer Skills Programs

Effective reading, study, and math skills are important factors in student retention. With this in mind, the task force suggests the following:

1. A summer skills program which emphasizes reading and study skills as well as a remedial math option.

2. The correlation and integration of courses which emphasize practice in effective study approaches for each academic discipline.

VI. Task Force on Commuter Concerns (Joseph A. Merante, Chairperson; Robert M. Firth, Anne Levenson, Cynthia Mittelmeier, Frank F. Reed, and Eugene C. Richardson)

The high attrition of commuter students is an obvious but complex problem, and it is important that these complexities be understood. Traditionally, the commuter student has had the most difficulty adjusting (academically and socially) and integrating into the campus community.

In every area, commuters are less involved than their resident peers. They are less fully involved in academic activities, in extra-curricular activities, and in social activities with other students. Much of their time is spent in transit to and from home. Many of the student's perceptions of Pitt are based upon commuting to the University, the time involved, and their experiences on campus and in Oakland. All too often, the commuter feels segregated and not really a part of the campus community. To compound this sense of apartness is the anxiety and, sometimes, fear of the Oakland area. The campus is situated in one of the most congested sections of the city, and the size and make-up of the area can be intimidating to a student who has only recently left the security of his or her high school. The time spent making bus connections and searching for a parking space sometimes preclude the commuter student from opportunities for involvement in the campus community.

A. Definition of the Commuter

The commuter student for purposes of this study, is one who does not live in a dormitory on campus or in campus-related residences such as fraternities or sororities. Inadequate housing facilities makes it imperative for many who would like campus housing to seek accommodations in the surrounding area. The University of Pittsburgh has

a student body of 11,294 full-time and 5,556 part-time. Approximately 4,200 students live in on-campus housing. Pitt has 7,094 full-time undergraduate commuter students and 5,556 part-time commuters. Fully 65% of the full-time undergraduate student body is made up of commuters. This study is essentially concerned with commuters of the traditional college age group: older commuters are reviewed elsewhere in the report.

B. Factors Related to the Commuter

1. National studies indicate that commuters drop out at twice the rate of residential students. (Or stopout, since many CAS and CGS students return to complete degrees after apparent dropout behavior.)

2. The SAT scores and high school class rank are generally lower for the commuter student. (The CGS population may depart from this characteristic because of age or because of time lapse between completing high school and beginning advanced study.)

3. Many commuters have part-time jobs that may take up to twenty hours per week of their time, or even engage in full-time employment. (Close to 80% of the CGS student body work full-time, while another 7% work part-time. Many of these students are persistent and competent students.)

4. In general, commuters are primarily interested in a degree assuring gainful employment after graduation. Nevertheless, many are troubled by indecision about major and career goals. For many commuters, there is lack of understanding about that which higher education has to offer beyond course-work in a major or as a requirement for the degree. Commuters tend to be more vocationally oriented than resident students, and there is a significant expectation that college should lead to a well paying career.

5. Commuters more frequently report problems concerning interpersonal relationships with peers and family, and report or indicate financial problems.

6. Commuters consistently have least frequent exchange with the faculty in or out of class. There is no doubt that student/faculty and student/student interaction are major factors in institutional identification and, in turn, that such identification is a major factor in retention. Some students, of course, are able to establish relationships with faculty and peers better than others.

C. Recommendations

1. Academic and Related Support Areas

a. Encourage instructors to structure classroom activities which will enhance interaction among students. Group projects, small group discussions and other such strategies force student interaction. Students so involved will more likely greet and relate to each other on campus. (This method would not be practical for large lecture sections.)

b. Instructors should circulate a name/address/phone roster sheet during the second week of class. (This is currently being done with off-campus CGS courses.) If a student does not want his/her name to appear, it will be removed after one copy is retained for personal use by the instructor. Copies are made for distribution to the class so that a student can receive peer assistance for a missed class, obtain classroom notes, find a ride, or even identify another person with whom to study.

c. Departmental open houses may be held once to twice a year, allowing students to have a personal one-to-one contact with all

or most of the faculty of that Department, and to better understand the objectives and concepts related to the Department.

d. Appoint an academic ombudsman in each School to act on complaints and to serve as an informal advisor, when a student's regular advisor is not available.

2. Information Access

a. Publicize often and in wider on-campus physical locations various student support services.

b. Add to the Pitt News, a section devoted to the commuter.

c. Publicize campus events through a commuter newsletter which would also act as a forum for commuter concerns. Regular features would include calendar reminders and new courses and majors. Student comments and concerns should also be solicited through this medium.

d. Develop a common gathering area in the Union (such as a coffee shop) where bulletin boards pertaining to commuter interests can be posted, and where commuters might study, eat, rest, and perhaps even come to know some resident students.

3. Student Activities

a. A concerted effort is needed to get students involved in various student activities. Commuters need to feel that they are a part of the campus community. Emphasize student activities in orientation as an integral part of education in the University, with a sign up opportunity at the same time for participation in activities, so that once the academic year starts those interested can be contacted by appropriate organizations.

b. Provide, wherever possible, on-campus jobs for commuters. Information about job opportunities should be made readily available.

VII. Task Force on Minorities (Joel Reed, Chairperson; Shirley M. Atkins, and Gee Chin)

A. Introduction

In an attempt to address the University's concern regarding minority student retention, the task force solicited information regarding undergraduate minority student retention from U-CEP, the Schools of Engineering, Health Related Professions, Nursing, Social Work, and the Chancellor's Task Force on Black Student Concerns. The task force also reviewed the information on attrition/retention provided to the full Committee.

Based upon information received and reviewed, there appears to be little question that there are numerous variables related to the retention of minority students, broadly classified as environmental, socio-cultural, and personality (cognitive and affective). Of these three broad categories, the one which cannot be altered by University programming are socio-cultural variables such as minority status, sex, prior educational experience, and economic and cultural background. The cognitive personality factor of low ability also is not likely to be altered with planned University intervention. However, other personality factors, both cognitive and affective, which can be altered are poor study habits, poor basic skills, low motivation, and low self-image. Environmentally, the University cannot change a student's physical distance from the institution, but it can develop a more supportive and caring environment within the institution.

Current special University efforts to retain undergraduate minority students are available in U-CEP, Engineering and Nursing.

These special efforts are primarily directed at positively affecting variables such as academic skills, study habits, motivation, and self-image or concept. As a result of these special efforts students are provided, in many instances, with very supportive environments. The principle ingredient in the supportive environments appears to be the presence of a concerned and committed professional, generally Black (faculty, counselor, administrator). However, too often, the supportive environment is not available in the University at large, with few exceptions. One notable exception is the School of Social Work. In the past four years, only one minority undergraduate did not complete a program of study. According to the School, this is largely the result of considerable faculty effort (formal and informal) which is devoted to supporting students in the School.

If the School of Social Work can be used as a model, exclusive of the "special" efforts to retain minority students, it seems that one strategy for University-wide minority student retention would be to have considerable faculty and other professional staff effort directed at supporting students. It should be noted that the School of Social Work also has a significant number of minority faculty.

B. Review of Information Received

1. School of Social Work

As reported in the prior section, the School of Social Work feels that faculty effort directed at supporting students is extremely important in the retention of minority students. However, the School does not accept students until they have successfully completed

two years of undergraduate work. Thus, their students may have resolved some of the factors which inhibit minority student retention.

2. U-CEP

Last year U-CEP collected data by questionnaire on student perceptions of U-CEP and the University. The questionnaire was completed by current and former U-CEP students. The questionnaire included thirty nine items. Eighteen of the items related to students' assessment of their academic and academic related behaviors and activities. The other twenty one items consisted of environmental and other factors considered to be important to a student's academic success (retention). The items were rated with regard to their importance on a five point scale of "unimportant" to "extremely important." The top ten factors based upon the percentage of response to the "extremely important" category are listed below. There were one hundred and fifty usable responses.

Factor	Percentage
Selecting a major related to abilities and interests	86.3
Receiving financial aid	72
Knowing academic rules and regulations	71.3
Receiving dependable academic advising	71.1
Having personal support from family members	70.3
Handling delays, mix-ups, lost grades, and other bureaucratic red tape	70
Receiving financial aid on time	66.7
Receiving professional counseling when needed	61.9
Having Black instructors	49.7
Receiving academic support from friends or fellow students	48.3

The survey was developed to obtain Black students' assessment of the effectiveness of the University in meeting the general needs of Black undergraduates.

3. Chancellor's Task Force on Black Student Concerns

Additionally, as a part of the Chancellor's Task Force on Black Student Concerns, a Survey of Perception of Black Undergraduate Students of the University of Pittsburgh was conducted. The survey involved Black undergraduates on the Pittsburgh campus. Five hundred and fifty (550) questionnaires were distributed and there were two hundred and fourteen (214) responses. A majority (73%) of the respondents were enrolled in the College of Arts and Sciences. However, eight percent (8%) of the respondents were from Nursing, eight percent (8%) from Social Work, two percent (2%) from the Health Related Professions, and nine percent (9%) from Engineering.

One part of the survey, using an open-ended format, asked students to respond to three questions. Students were first asked to list three things they felt the University had done to assist Black students; of the ninety two (92) students responding to this question, sixty three (63) listed U-CEP as a major assistance mechanism. The remaining responses referred to the "special" admission programs in the Schools of Engineering and Nursing, the Department of Black Studies, the Black Action Society, and the availability of supportive services.

The second question asked for student comments on at least three major problems Black students encountered at the University. Analysis of the responses revealed that the most cited problem was discriminatory behaviors on the campus generally, but especially on the

part of white instructors. The students perceived their instructors as being unwilling and/or incapable of assisting Black students.

The final question asked students to give their reason(s) for coming to Pitt. The two major reasons reported for selecting the University were that it was not too far from home, and that it is a prestigious institution.

4. School of Nursing

The Black students in the School of Nursing have discussed the following concerns and needs as they related to retention:

a. Increased Black faculty;

b. Additional activities (School related) where they "feel welcome" to participate;

c. Collage and/or photographs of nursing students which include Blacks;

d. Removal of the feeling of isolation where they are "the only Black;"

e. More effective counseling on achievement while courses are in progress;

f. Clarification of instructor expectations; and

g. Financial aid for tuition and stipends are vital for full-time minority graduate students.

The School of Nursing, it must be observed, has and continues to be agressive in its recruitment of Black students. The comments do not indicate a lack of commitment or effort, but are designed rather, as both observations of the inability of the School, to this point, to achieve its objectives in this area and to offer positive suggestions which might prove of assistance.

5. School of Health Related Professions

The results of an informal survey conducted with minority students in the School of Health Related Professions indicates that there is a need for more Black faculty in order to increase student retention as well as to make the environment more accommodating.

6. School of Engineering

The Pitt Engineering Impact Program provided the following criteria for a successful engineering retention program.

a. Program goals must receive the endorsement and support of the institution's highest officials, and programmatic activities must be consistent with the goals as endorsed.

b. Retention begins with an ethically conducted recruitment program and admission standards based upon research concerning the characteristics of persisters.

c. In order to improve the flow of nontraditional students into college, inter-institutional alliances should be formed with targeted, potential feeder high schools and community colleges whereby there can be cooperative programs and professional exchange.

d. It is futile to attempt to orient students to institutional demands before they have had direct experience with such demands.

e. It is important for program participants to feel an identification with the program and yet not feel stigmatized by the program.

f. The best retention services directly address the areas of greatest student anxiety and frustration.

g. Retention programs take the initiative in promoting and providing services.

h. In order to insure program relevance, students should be treated as consumers.

i. In order to build campus support for an equal opportunity program, the program must not only accomplish its objectives; it must demonstrate its value to the institution.

j. The lifeblood of equal opportunity programs is a staff whose members have demonstrated that they can make a difference in student performance and for whom the program is an extension of their own personal values and commitments.

C. Summary and Recommendations

The information received and reviewed indicates that there are indeed various factors or variables which impact on minority student retention. The information tends to support the position that a supportive environment staffed with concerned professions would enhance the University's ability to retain minority students.

Recommendations:

1. The University should actively increase its efforts to recruit and hire more minority faculty and professionals University-wide. The task force acknowledges the University's commitment to affirmative action and social justice, but it is necessary to intensify these efforts, especially at the faculty level.

2. The University should utilize more of the strategies employed by the "special" intervention programs it supports and sponsors for the access and retention of minority students.

3. The University should establish a University-wide office or mechanism whose concern would be the monitoring of minority student retention and the conditions which impact upon their retention.

4. The University should begin to investigate a meaningful mechanism to reward those faculty and staff who work with and for minority student retention.

5. The University should develop a mechanism to increase the number of cultural activities (lectures, seminars, entertainment, etc.) of interest to minority students.

6. The University, in context of long range planning, should develop a schedule of firm budget commitments to the programs designed for access and retention of minority students.

VIII. Task Force on Physical Environment (Robert G. Houston, Chairperson; Patricia Beck, Alden E. Bowen, Samuel D. Deep, and E. Tracy Lewis)

The Task Force on Physical Environment and Student Retention submits the following overview as a cursory indication of student perceptions towards the Physical Environment of the University of Pittsburgh.

The "Environment" was defined in terms of its academic, non-academic, and general ambiance qualities. The questions in the survey were generated on these dimensions. A cross section of one hundred and eighty one students derived by purposive - non-probabilistic sampling consists of: 80% white, 9% Black, 11% others. Fifty one percent (51%) of the sample are males, 49% females. Dormitory students constituted 24% of the sample; 12% indicated that they lived within walking distance; and 64% indicated driving distance. Twenty four percent (24%) of the sample are Freshmen; 23% Sophomores; 24% Juniors; and 29% Seniors.

For purposes of this prefatory report, plus (+) and minus (-) signs will be used to designate student responses of agreement and disagreement.

A. Academic

Students tend to find the academic aspect of the physical environment acceptable.

1. Classrooms are adequate for the courses you are taking. (+)
   a. Lighting (+);
   b. Size (+); and
   c. Acoustics (+).
2. There tends to be too much distance between classrooms. (-)
3. The location of classrooms is a major consideration in scheduling my classes. (-)

4. Classrooms are generally well maintained. (+)

5. Laboratory equipment necessary to carry out what is expected of me in my course work is available. (+)

6. Laboratory equipment necessary to carry out what is expected of me is adequate. (+)

7. Classroom locations conform to published schedules. (+)

8. Access to classrooms is difficult. (-)

B. Non-Academic

The students tend to find the Union inadequate; however, the Athletic Facilities were reported as adequate.

1. The Union is an attractive feature of the University of Pittsburgh. (-)

2. The Union is inadequate for its intended purpose. (+)

3. Spending time in the Union is an important part of your day. (-)

4. The Athletic Facilities provide adequate recreational opportunities. (+)

5. Access to available Athletic Facilities is generally not a problem. (+)

6. Maintenance of Athletic Facilities is generally good. (+)

C. General Ambiance

It is of significance to note that the students report that the physical environment does not play a major role in the selection of or the continuation at the University of Pittsburgh. However, the academic programs seem to be of paramount importance in terms of selecting to come to Pitt.

1. The general visual impact of the University of Pittsburgh is pleasing. (+)

2. The grounds of the University are generally well maintained. (+)

3. The environment of the University generally is unappealing. (-)

4. Litter dominates the University campus. (-)

5. The proliferation of businesses surrounding the University detract from the general appearance on campus. (-)

6. Public transportation to the University is dependable. (+)

7. Parking spaces at the University are difficult to find. (+)

8. Campus bus service is dependable. (+)

9. The University has provided adequate space for study. (+)

10. The University has provided adequate space for relaxation. (-)

11. The University is lighted well at night. (-)

12. At night, campus security is adequate. (-)

13. The University of Pittsburgh's physical environment was a significant factor in your choice to enroll here. (-)

14. The University of Pittsburgh's physical environment plays a critical role in whether you continue to attend here. (-)

15. Academic standards play a more significant role than the University's physical environment. (+)

16. Student Activities programs are more important than the University's physical environment. (+ -) (no appreciable difference)

D. Top Priorities

The major areas the students would like to see improved:

1. Parking;
2. Union;
3. Classrooms;
4. Dormitories; and
5. Campus Lighting.

IX. Conclusions and Summary of Recommendations

The Retention Committee has, throughout the preceding pages, identified problem areas and offered suggestions that might lead to better student satisfaction and, therefore, retention. The following have been abstracted from the task force reports; they are not all inclusive. The Committee further recognizes that a healthy academic environment is essentially a "state of mind." It cannot be effectively legislated; it can and must be encouraged.

Specifically, we recommend that:

A. Student/Faculty Relationships

1. Each Department develop codes of standards for the procedural conduct of teaching duties. Infractions of the codes should be discussed with the faculty member, and the infraction and discussion become a part of the faculty member's dossier. The Provost should refresh the consciousness and use of the codes of teaching standards periodically, preferably via the Faculty Newletter.

2. A mechanism be devised by which students' complaints can reach the appropriate administrative location using a standard teaching complaint form. The information on the form can then be discussed between the chairperson and the instructor involved, and the form and a notation of the discussion should become a part of the instructor's dossier.

3. Each dean report to the Provost on the kinds of faculty teaching infractions that were reported to chairpersons during the year, actions that were taken in specific cases, and Departmental actions to implement their codes of teaching standards.

4. The department chairpersons, in cases in which recurrent student complaints surface about individual faculty members, refer those faculty members to the Office of Faculty Development for consultation on the specific problems that are uncovered.

5. Each department chairperson annually submit to the dean the names of the top faculty in teaching competence for appropriate recognition.

B. Advisement

1. The Provost issue a policy statement which stresses that quality academic advising is an important and integral part of the educational process, offering specific guidelines to be developed by each Provost area School or College.

C. Freshman Year

1. A comprehensive information and referral center be implemented which would operate a well-informed, thorough service, enabling prospective students to make better informed decisions about attending Pitt, and specifically assist new students.

2. A one or two credit orientation course be made available to a substantial number of students during their first term.

3. A study be conducted to determine which courses have the greatest freshmen enrollment. These courses should then be reviewed in

terms of class size, type of instructor, grade distribution, and student evaluation. Efforts should be made to develop a freshman curricula with at least some reasonably small classes, varying starting points, and high quality instructors.

4. The series of CAS freshman seminars be revitalized by appointing a part-time coordinator to recruit instructors, develop seminar topics with the instructors, and monitor and evaluate the courses.

5. The many existing skills-oriented facilities and courses be coordinated and integrated, and their use encouraged by the appropriate students.

6. The professional Schools provide advising on a regular basis to those freshmen who intend to apply to those Schools.

7. A sense of a University community be developed through better informal meeting facilities and a high quality subscription lecture series.

8. A summer skills program be developed which would emphasize reading and study skills and include a remedial math option. Courses which emphasize practice in effective study approaches should be correlated and integrated for each academic discipline.

D. Commuter Concerns

1. Facilities on campus be developed where students, particularly commuters, and faculty can meet.

2. Commuters be involved in campus activities; disseminate information through a commuter newsletter or a section in the Pitt News devoted to the commuter.

3. Interaction with other commuters, resident students, and faculty members be encouraged by holding Departmental open houses and by structuring classroom activities to include group discussions and projects. Name/address/phone rosters should be made available to all class members.

E. Minorities

1. University-wide efforts be increased in the recruiting and hiring of minority faculty and professionals.

2. More of the strategies employed by "special" intervention programs be utilized for the access and retention of minority students.

3. An office be established to monitor minority student retention and the conditions which impact upon their retention.

4. Faculty and staff who work with and for minority student retention be rewarded.

5. The number of cultural activities of interest to minority students be increased.

F. Physical Environment

1. Certain aspects of the physical environment be improved: parking, student union, classrooms, dormitories, and campus lighting.

X. APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Summary of Complaints Concerning CGS Instructors as Reported to Various CGS Counselors

The following reflect some of the student comments made directly to advisors; many of the comments were made with disturbing frequency.

1. The instructor is foreign and is difficult to understand.

2. The instructor talks too fast, too low, or from the back of the room.

3. The instructor shows a lack of respect when a student expresses complaints or dissatisfaction about the course.

4. The instructor does not show up for class and is unable to notify the class beforehand because he/she did not get the students' phone numbers.

5. The instructor never called the student's name off the roster, and towards the end of the term the individual is informed that he/she is in the wrong section.

6. The instructor does not show up for the class (a frequent comment).

7. When a student joined the class late, the instructor would not let the individual join the group. The student was put into a special section of the room and was made to feel like a grade schooler.

8. The instructor shows through teaching style and attitude that there is no commitment to teaching the course in CGS. It is just an assignment that must be muddled through for fifteen weeks.

9. The instructor is difficult to get in touch with and or does not return phone calls to the student.

10. The instructor does not have office hours convenient to the CGS student.

11. Student claims instructor lost final exam; instructor claims student never took test.

12. Instructor cancelled a class meeting at last moment and student came to Oakland to find no instructor or class.

13. Instructor unprepared for class.

14. The instructor missed first class, dismissed second after twenty minutes or so.

15. Students not informed during add/drop period that an oral report would be required.

16. The instructor lectured directly from textbook.

17. Tests were spaced poorly and were not counted proportionally to material covered.

18. The instructor ends class early.

19. The instructor did not cover material for which the course was designed.

20. The instructor was often late for class, "just outlined material on the board and expected students to feed it back on exams."

21. Student received inadequate explanation about final grade.

22. Some instructors have difficulty in explaining course concepts in a clear, concise manner.

23. Some instructors administer exams containing questions which are inappropriate, involving the memorization of insignificant details.

24. Many CGS students complain of difficulty in getting or requesting letters of recommendation from faculty.

25. Few instructors have evening appointment hours; CGS students most often see instructors before or after class.

APPENDIX B

FACULTY RELATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE

A subcommittee of the Provost's Committee on Student Retention is studying problems in faculty-student relationships. You have been randomly selected from a group of students that will have completed thirty or so credits at Pitt by the end of this term. If you do not fall into this category, please return this questionnaire to the distributor. If you are a student with thirty credits or so, please complete the following questions and return the questionnaire to the distributor. All individual information will be kept strictly confidential and cannot be associated with your name or any other personal identification. Do not name any faculty members in your answers.

Note: The word "instructor" refers to either a faculty member or a teaching assistant. If you know that a certain instructor was a teaching assistant, please write "TA" after the answer that applies.

AVE. N=244 (Please circle the appropriate response)

2.5 1. How many terms have you attended Pitt, including this one?

(1)one (2) two (3) three (4) four or more

31 2. What is the total number of credits you have taken at Pitt, including this term?

(1) 6 or fewer (2) 7-12 (3) 13-18 (4) 19-24 (5) 25-30 (6) 31-36

3. In which school are you currently enrolled?

161 (1) College of Arts and Sciences
23 (2) School of Nursing
4 (3) School of Education
3 (4) School of Pharmacy
42 (5) School of Engineering
4 (6) School of Social Work
1 (7) Health-Related Professions
1 (8) School of General Studies
3 (9) Other

18.9 4. Age: _____ Sex: (1) Male (2) Female

1.9 5. Thinking back to when you first decided to attend Pitt, how important was it to you to graduate from Pitt?

(1) Extremely important (2) Very important
(3) Somewhat important (4) Not important at all

2.5 6. Generally speaking, how satisfied have you been with the quality of teaching at Pitt?

(1) Very satisfied (2) Satisfied
(3) Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (4) Dissatisfied
(5) Very dissatisfied

(1+2=65% SATISFIED
3=22% NEUTRAL
4+5=15% DISSATISFIED)

2.0 7. How important is it to you now to graduate from Pitt?

(1) Extremely important (2) Very important
(3) Somewhat important (4) Not important at all

8. How often have you had an instructor who projected an attitude of not caring about teaching undergraduates?

(1) Never (2) Once (3) Twice or more (2+3=69%)

FACULTY RELATIONS QUESTIONNAIRE — PAGE 2

9. How often have you tried to meet with an instructor during office hours?

(1) Never (2) Once or twice (3) More than twice (2+3=84%)

9.a. If you checked (2) or (3) above, how many times were you unable to find him/her? (2+3=57%)

(1) Found him/her always (2) Found him/her sometimes (3) Never found him/her

10. How often have instructors cancelled or failed to show up for one of your classes?

(1) never (2) once or twice (3) three times or more (2+3=88%)

11. How often have you had instructors who didn't seem to be prepared adequately for class? (3+4=38%)

(1) Never (2) rarely (3) occasionally (4) frequently

12. How often have you had instructors who didn't adequately inform the class about course grading procedures?

(1) Never (2) once or twice (3) three times or more (2+3=52%)

13. Is there a specific subject area in which you have experienced problems with instructors?

(1) yes (2) no

SEE TABLE 5

13.a. If yes: which subject? _____

2.1

14. Given your current experiences at Pitt, how do you feel about your choice of attending Pitt?

(1) I definitely made the right choice (Skip to Question 15)
(2) I probably made the right choice (Skip to Question 15) (3+4+5=27%)
(3) I am undecided at this point (Skip to Question 15)
(4) I probably made the wrong choice
(5) I definitely made the wrong choice

SEE TABLE 6

14.a. If you feel you have made a wrong choice in attending Pitt, what are your future education plans?

SEE TABLE 7

15. Please take this opportunity to expand on any topics we have already discussed or comment on other problems you've had with faculty-student relationships at Pitt. (Use the back of this sheet if necessary.)

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

TABLE 1

Faculty Relations Questionnaire

Question 6: Impressions of Teaching by School

	CAS	ENGINEERING	NURSING
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)
Very satisfied	11 (7.3)	3 (7.1)	1 (4.3)
Satisfied	87 (58.0)	20 (47.6)	16 (69.5)
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	26 (17.3)	14 (33.3)	5 (21.7)
Dissatisfied	23 (15.3)	4 (9.5)	1 (4.3)
Very dissatisfied	3 (2.0)	1 (2.3)	0 (0.0)
Totals	150	42	23

TABLE 2

Faculty Relations Questionnaire

Question 6: (Quality of Teaching) vs Question 14: (Pitt Being the Right Choice)
(All schools)

	Definitely Right	Probably Right	Undecided	Probably Wrong	Definitely Wrong
	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)
Very Satisfied	11 (4.9)	4 (1.7)	1 (0.4)	--	--
Satisfied	41 (18.0)	66 (29.0)	18 (8.1)	--	1 (0.4)
Neither Satisfied nor dissatisfied	5 (2.2)	21 (9.4)	15 (6.7)	2 (0.9)	--
Dissatisfied	2 (0.9)	8 (3.5)	12 (5.3)	10 (4.4)	2 (0.9)
Very dissatisfied	--	--	1 (0.4)	--	3 (1.3)

Analysis of data: Chi squared = 169; correlation coefficient = 0.19.
The two variables are related (not by chance) at the 0.001 level.
The strength of the correlation on a scale of 0 to 1 is 0.19.

TABLE 3

Faculty Relations Questionnaire

Questions 8 - 12: Instructors' Attitudes by School

		CAS	ENGINEERING	NURSING
		No. (%)	No. (%)	No. (%)
8. Instructor projected an uncaring attitude	Never	50 (33.8)	12 (29.2)	6 (27.3)
	Once	47 (31.7)	15 (36.6)	10 (45.4)
	2 or more	51 (34.4)	14 (34.1)	6 (27.3)
	Totals	148	41	22
9. Student tried to meet with instructor during office hours	Never	26 (17.3)	7 (16.7)	1 (4.3)
	1 or 2	51 (34.0)	15 (35.7)	14 (60.9)
	3 or more	73 (48.7)	20 (47.6)	8 (34.8)
	Totals	150	42	23
9a. Instructor was found during office hours	Always	54 (44.2)	11 (32.3)	17 (73.9)
	Sometimes	68 (55.7)	23 (67.6)	6 (26.0)
	Never	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)	0 (0.0)
	Totals	122	34	23
10. Classes were cancelled	Never	14 (9.4)	6 (14.2)	7 (31.8)
	1 or 2	82 (55.4)	20 (47.6)	14 (63.6)
	3 or more	52 (35.1)	16 (38.0)	1 (4.5)
	Totals	148	42	22
11. Instructors were inadequately prepared	Never	30 (20.1)	3 (7.3)	3 (13.0)
	Rarely	70 (47.0)	19 (46.3)	14 (60.9)
	Occasionally	49 (32.9)	16 (39.0)	5 (21.7)
	Frequently	0 (0.0)	3 (7.3)	1 (4.3)
	Totals	149	41	23
12. Grading procedures were inadequately explained	Never	81 (54.0)	13 (30.9)	8 (38.0)
	1 or 2	63 (42.0)	24 (57.1)	10 (47.6)
	3 or more	6 (4.0)	5 (11.9)	3 (14.2)
	Totals	150	42	21

TABLE 4

Faculty Relations Questionnaire

Questions 8, 10 and 12: Attitudes of Instructors by Number of Terms at Pitt

Assumptions of Calculation:

1. Each student had four instructors per term. (The average number of credits was 12.4 per term.)

2. Students checking "four or more terms" were taken as having attended for four terms. (Students in the sample having more than four terms' experience would have the effect of making the percentages in the "four terms" column too high.)

3. All students had different sets of four classes each term; i.e., there was no duplication of classes among student responders. (Any duplication would have the effect of making the percentages in any given column too high.)

4. (a) Students answering "once or twice" were recorded as "1 1/2 times."
   (b) Students answering "twice or more" were recorded as "twice."
   (c) Students answering "three times or more" were recorded as "three times."
   (Operations (b) and (c) would have the effect of making the percentages too low.)

PERCENTAGES SHOWN IN THE TABLE ARE THE PERCENTAGES OF ALL INSTRUCTORS IN THE STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE AT PITT THAT HAVE SHOWN THE SPECIFIED BEHAVIORS.

	Terms at Pitt			
	1	2	3	4
8. Uncaring attitude regarding undergraduates	44% (n=9)	18% (n=156)	Insufficient data	10% (n=54)
10. Cancelled classes	38% (n=9)	25% (n=157)		14% (n=54)
12. Gave inadequate information regarding grading	38% (n=9)	20% (n=158)		12% (n=54)

Interpretation: (e.g.) 25% of all the instructors had by those students who have been at Pitt for two terms (out of 157 students replying) have cancelled or failed to show up for at least one class.

TABLE 5

Faculty Relations Questionnaire

Question 13a: Subject Areas In Which Problems With Instructors Have Been Encountered

Number of Students Naming Subject	Subject
25	Chemistry (Chem. 92, 93, 12, 32, 11, 80)
19	Math (Math 22, 23, 3, 12, Algebra, Trigonometry)
15	Biology
15	English (Eng. 87, Composition, Writing)
7	Philosophy
6	Engineering
5	Physics (Phys. 15)
5	Economics (Econ. 10)
4	Sociology (Soc. 67)
3	Computer Science
3	Geography
2	French (French 21)
2	Political Science
2	Psychology
2	Science
1	Basic Writing
1	Fine Arts (Design 1)
1	History (History 41)
1	Physical Science
1	Rhetoric
1	Russian History
1	Speech

TABLE 6

Faculty Relations Questionnaire

Question 14a: Future Plans

Future plans of those who feel that Pitt was the wrong choice:

1) Transfer to a specific college or location. 8
2) Transfer to an unspecified school. 7
3) Circumstances force student to remain at Pitt anyway. 3

TABLE 7

Faculty Relations Questionnaire

Question 15: Open-ended Comments

	Number of Comments
Foreign-speaking teachers not intelligible	18
Teachers Insensitive/automatic teaching	18
Poor grading techniques	13
Undergraduate expectations too high	7
Poor course planning - pre-exam cram	5
Poor office hours	5
Professors intelligent but cannot teach	5
Large class size/no teacher-student relationships	4
Research overemphasized	4
Cancelled classes	3
TA's overworked	3
TA's unable to answer questions	2

APPENDIX C

Freshman Course Outline

The following is a proposal for a one or two credit course to be offered to first term freshmen. It is designed to facilitate their transition from high school to college and to familiarize them with many aspects of the University. Topics to be covered in this course include:

1. Discussions (perhaps supplemented by readings)

a. The nature of higher education--why people seek education; what is the value of a liberal arts education; reasons for coming to college; reasons for coming to Pitt; etc.;

b. Liberal Arts vs. Professional Education;

c. The responsibilities of being a student;

d. What can students expect from faculty; and

e. Topics generated by the students.

2. Explanations

Some aspects of the University seem to be quite baffling to students. This part of the course is designed to give them an overall picture of how the University functions, especially those parts that are most relevant to them. Various offices and administrators would be asked to prepare short written statements and make presentations to the classes with respect to the following:

a. The Structure of the University

How are the various Schools organized; what are the roles of and relationships between various positions such as faculty, deans, provosts, chancellors, etc.

b. Grievances and Appeals

What can a student do with a complaint or problem with a particular faculty member? What can a student do with a complaint or problem about an administrative office? Who is the student ombudsman and what can he/she do for students?

c. The Faculty Tenure System

How does it work? What do the various titles mean?

d. The Registrar's Office

How to avoid common registration problems. What to do about registration problems, e.g. closed courses.

e. Financial Aid Office

Procedures for applying; what kinds of aid are available?

f. Advising

What students should expect from advisors; how to seek advice; what to do if you are unhappy with your advisor.

g. Housing (both on campus and off-campus)

3. Exposure to Student Services

Classes would visit, receive explanations of, and sometimes use many of the University support services that are available to students, such as:

a. Learning Skills Center;

b. Personal Counseling Center;

c. Career Counseling and Library;

d. Pre-professional Advising;

e. Placement Office;

f. University Library System;

g. Term Paper Clinic;

h. Writing Workshop;

i. Tutoring Services;

j. Academic Attainment Center; and

k. College Reading Courses and Laboratory.

4. Community Resources

Students would be introduced to some of the relevant resources available in the surrounding community.

5. Alumni

It may be possible to have Pitt alumni speak to classes about their experiences at Pitt, what was most valuable in their education, and what they are currently doing.

Since one purpose of this course is to provide freshmen with a support group of other students, it is important that the size of the classes be small enough to facilitate discussions and to maintain a certain informality. Fifteen seems to be an ideal number, but this could probably be expanded a little.

It is suggested that this course be taught with a team approach with various faculty, staff, and administrators volunteering to cover certain topics. However, it would be necessary to have one person associated with each section who would coordinate the various parts, lead discussions, and relate the various topics. This person should be someone who is very familiar with many aspects of the University. A pool

for such coordinators could include interested advisors, faculty, and administrators. The responsibilities could vary depending on whether the course was designed to include written assignments or term papers.

APPENDIX D

Miscellaneous Observations

In the course of the Committee reviews, members were asked to offer comments and suggestions they thought pertinent which might not necessarily fit within the structure of one of the designated task forces, or which cross task force areas. The following represent those responses which are significant.

A. Chancellor's Scholars and Honors Students

The Chancellor's scholars and honors students should be exposed to a social dimension in their activities. Incorporate them into such missions as serving the retention efforts of the University, working with minority students, or otherwise providing an opportunity for social service leadership.

B. Minority Students

In addition to the task force report on minorities, the following observations were offered. Black and other minority students represent an increasing student pool in view of the declining numbers of traditional students. Several special strategies are needed not only to recruit Black students, but to retain them with the University to the completion of their degree objectives. The formal commitment to recruit increased numbers of Black students will mean increased numbers of students whose learning styles, cognitive skills, affective dispositions, academic and career goals, and socio-economic backgrounds are those with which the University faculty, staff, administration, for the most part, are not familiar. Black student retention has implications for faculty, staff, and administration, for financial aid, for institutional environment factors, and for curricular adjustments.

C. Faculty Advisory Functions

Hardly an observation that can be classified as "general," but one that emerges so frequently and so consistently that it becomes worth repeating in every section of this report is the following:

One of the key factors in student retention is the ready availability of skillful, concerned faculty advisors. If each student were assigned an advisor at the very onset of his/her educational program and if that advisor were to reach out to these students early on and consistently, problems of financial difficulty, of school or job work load, of poor teaching, of personal problems, of academic weaknesses could be determined, assessed, and possibly dealt with in an effective and constructive fashion. All the other reasons for dropping out could be addressed if aggressive, thoughtful, and concerned faculty advising were made available to all students. This does not mean, of course, that a sensitive and dedicated faculty advisor will be able to head off all student problems, but early detection and early action might resolve problems whose later magnitude cause students to drop out.

D. Improvements in Student Services

The following improvements in student services are being developed through the Registrar's Office. These indicate past and some ongoing areas that have contributed to the loss of student morale and increase one's tendency to withdraw.

1. With regard to students:

a. Improved course information for all students. The Registrar's Office is currently working to develop course abstracts that

will provide students with information on course content, prerequisites needed, and so forth. This type of information will allow students to select courses to fulfill requirements for graduation, elective study, and distribution without special difficulty.

b. Individualized academic progress reports will provide students with information of the credits earned, credits carried in the current term, and credits yet required for final graduation clearance. With the help of the students' advisor, such a report will keep the student well informed of his needs in fulfillment of his degree requirements.

c. Provide students with a more meaningful transcript of work completed.

d. Provide immediate feedback on course availability. The current registration system does not provide such information; therefore, the student must wait in the registration lines and chance final enrollment in the course he/she wishes. Immediate information on space remaining in classes, via perhaps terminal inquiry, will reduce the "closed course" problem.

e. Provide a registration system which will reduce the time the student must wait in line to complete registration. The present system requires that Registrar personnel pull individual class cards for each course. The Registrar is currently designing new ways in which to expedite the registration process.

f. Provide immediate feedback to students and advisors on course cancellations. The present system delays notification to the student since all course files must be cleared by student enrollment before a course can be cancelled. Immediate notification will allow the

student to select another course, or if necessary, rearrange his schedule before the start of the term.

g. Make available detailed information on rules and regulations by which the student must abide. Although the University has many publications available to students which describe various rules, the Registrar feels that a general publication, easily accessible, briefly and concisely stated, be available to students. Such a publication will provide students with information they need to avoid misunderstandings and penalties. Final stages of such publications are being completed.

2. With regard to advisors:

a. Offer immediate information on course enrollment. The current system provides the individual Departments with a weekly report showing each course (and section) offered in the term identified. Although the Departments are notified on a daily basis of closed courses, enrollment statistics would be beneficial if they, too, could be reported daily. The use of terminal inquiry would provide the Departments with this type of information.

b. Provide department chairpersons and deans with historical course enrollments to help them plan for the future needs of their students. Presently, only the prior term enrollment is identified; at least three years of enrollment statistics will not only help the Departments and Schools, but will be of assistance to the Registrar when assigning classroom facilities. Students will benefit in that classroom assignments will be based on the need of the faculty member (blackboards, movie screens, etc.) and the enrollment of the course.

c. Provide each School with a report of all students on file who are eligible for graduation. The present method for securing such information requires that the student, upon advisement, complete an application for graduation. If the student fails to do so, he will not be formally graduated even though he has met all requirements. The report, which is proposed to show the students' major, degree objective, total credits earned, final quality point average and eligibility for honors, will allow the deans to certify the student for graduation without requiring action by the student.

d. Issue School transcripts which lists the courses by major, by distribution of studies, and by electives. Current records list the courses in chronological order. Since the Schools are required to audit the records to insure that the student is progressing adequately and fulfilling the requirements for graduation, the transcript using the suggested format will considerably reduce the time presently needed for audit.

e. Prepare a report to the deans identifying students who are eligible for recognition on the dean's list and identify students who appear to be probationary or subject to dismissal. Although the Registrar's Office provides each dean with cumulative Q.P.A. information on each student, the recommended report would identify these students individually within each designated classification.

3. With regard to transcripts:

a. Expand course titles. Currently, records show a fourteen character title which is oftentimes meaningless to third parties. The

title should be expanded to thirty two characters to make the transcript more readable. In the process is the expanding of the Course Master File to allow for the expanded title.

b. Identify students' major at the time of declaration rather than only at the time of graduation. In addition, the proposed transcript should show second majors and areas of concentration. Such information is of particular value to students. The manual system, the present method of maintaining the transcript, makes it difficult to enter such detail on the record. An automated system would provide the means to capture the information in a timely manner and record the detail accurately.

c. Allow the record to show not only the final quality point average, but also a term by term detail. The present system does not allow such information because of the many changes that occur after initial grades are recorded. Such information will help Schools and Departments to better advise their students.

d. The current record keeping system does not permit the recording of credits earned until the end of the structured term or session. The University offers "mini courses" that start and/or end outside the structured period. Students enrolling in such courses must wait until the end of the term before the grade can be recorded. The proposed transcript system would allow the recording of the final grade as soon as the course ends and provide the student with immediate feedback.

e. One School has developed modules that allow students to earn 1/2 credits. The present system does not provide the recording

of less than a whole credit. An alternative has been provided to record such information; however, it is inadequate. The system should allow the recording of the 1/2 credit modules and provide both the Schools and the student with a precise record of completion.

f. A revised transcript system should have many other features that will benefit the student and Schools indirectly. Automating the files will enable the office to update the transcripts more quickly and efficiently, thus providing concerned parties with immediate corrections. The Schools will receive a work copy of the record, listing the courses by major, distribution of studies and electives, rather than in chronological order. The new system should provide quality point averages by major, by term and/or cumulative, if the Schools so desire. Working copies should identify previously missing grades. Schools currently are required to research their files to determine if they are dealing with a "no grade" or an "NE" (no entry) situation.

g. Automated files will enable the retrieval of records when copies are requested by the School or student. The system should generate an alphabetical index that will facilitate such retrieval.

F. Task Force on Registration Lines

Some improvements in the time required for registration and fee payment have been made through the efforts of a Task Force on Registration Lines, which, while related to this overall report, has been filed separately. A new and updated report will be prepared by that group; when available, it should be reviewed in conjunction with this report.